

// A special meeting of the Council of the City of Lynchburg, recessed from January 11, was held on the 25th day of January, 2005, at 1:00 P.M., Second Floor Training Room, City Hall, Carl B. Hutcherson, Jr., President, presiding. The purpose of the meeting was to conduct a work session regarding several items. The following Members were present:

Present: Dodson, Foster, Gillette, Helgeson, Johnson, Seiffert, Hutcherson

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Absent:

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// Representatives of Brown, Edwards & Company, L.L.P., the City's external auditor, presented and provided a brief overview regarding the City's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) for fiscal year ending June 30, 2004.

// Commissioner of the Revenue Mitch Nuckles along with Financial Services Director Mike Hill provided a brief overview of the Tax Relief for the Elderly and Permanently Disabled Program, and asked that City Council consider increasing the gross income limitation for eligibility to receive real estate tax relief from \$27,000 to \$30,000. Mr. Nuckles explained that the total relief granted to participants is limited to City Council's allocation for the program. Mr. Nuckles went on to say that staff uses a matrix that provides the higher relief of the budgetary allocation to the applicants with the lowest income and net worth while applicants with greater income and net worth receive a lower percentage of relief. In response to Council questioning, Mr. Nuckles explained that if the gross income limitation is increased and should more participants become eligible, the maximum amount of the program would still remain at whatever amount City Council has allocated to the program, and that some applicants may see a change in the percentage of relief as the allocation is redistributed. Council Member Gillette stated that he would not like to see a reduction in the percentage of relief for those individuals who really need the tax relief, and suggested that a written commitment be included in the matrix that would ensure that the first priority of the program would be to fully fund those individuals with the greatest need. Following discussion, City Council expressed interest in receiving more information regarding the matrix and asked that the item be scheduled again for discussion at the February 22 work session.

// Mayor Hutcherson announced that Agenda Item #3, Feral and Stray Cat Management, has been rescheduled for the February 22 work session.

// City Manager Kimball Payne provided a brief history regarding the City's Residential Rental Inspection Program. Building Commissioner Bob Drane along with Chris Bergquist, Housing Code Inspector, presented an overview regarding the proposed changes to the City's program to correspond to changes made during the 2004 Legislative Session of the General Assembly. Council briefly discussed the proposed changes, including whether to increase the reinspection fee to \$50/unit. City Council asked that a public hearing be scheduled for March 8, that this item be scheduled for the March 22 work session for further discussion, and that interested parties be notified of the proposed changes and the date of the public hearing.

// City Manager Kimball Payne asked that City Council provide direction toward the possible amendment of the City's practice regarding the handling of disabled, unattended or abandoned vehicles. Mr. Payne

presented an overview of seven options for consideration, explaining that information provided at the January 11 meeting regarding the number of Police initiated tows was incorrect, and that about 20% or approximately 400 vehicles per year would be Police initiated tows. Mr. Payne went on to say that once City Council has reached a decision, that it would take about ninety days to draft a policy. Council Members discussed the pros and cons of each option. Following discussion, and on motion of Council Member Seiffert, seconded by Council Member Helgeson, Council by the following recorded vote approved Option #7, which would be to retain the current "Preferred Tower" system and award a single contract for all other tows initiated by the City (police initiated tows when the preferred tower system is not applicable, towing of City owned vehicles, towing of derelict vehicles):

Ayes: Dodson, Foster, Gillette, Helgeson, Johnson, Seiffert, Hutcherson 7

Noes: 0

// City Manager Kimball Payne presented a briefing regarding the Healthy Neighborhoods Program, which is an outgrowth of the Safe Neighborhoods Initiative. Mr. Payne explained that the focus of the Healthy Neighborhoods Program will be to build the capacity for sustainable neighborhoods rather than being reactive to community events, such as an increase in gang related violence. City Council also heard from Safe Neighborhoods Program Coordinator Albert Jennings who stated that he would like to see a community action movement with the participation of more young people.

// City Manager Kimball Payne stated that there has been some interest in providing assistance to businesses that have been impacted by Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) construction on Memorial Avenue. Mr. Payne went on to say that if City Council is interested in providing assistance, that staff is recommending that it be done in a manner similar to the program established in response to construction on Ninth Street, which was administered by Lynch's Landing as it affected downtown businesses. Mr. Payne explained that if Council has an interest in maintaining such a program to address construction impacts on businesses throughout the City, that staff is suggesting that the program be administered by the Lynchburg Industrial Development Authority and the Office of Economic Development. Mr. Payne also noted that funding for the program in the amount of \$50,000 is available via capital funds or the Reserve for Contingencies. Following discussion, City Council asked that staff develop guidelines for a capital grants program to be administered by the Lynchburg Industrial Development Authority and the Office of Economic Development to address construction impacts on businesses throughout the City, and that the guidelines be scheduled for discussion at a future work session. On motion of Council Member Johnson, seconded by Council Member Dodson, Council by the following recorded vote appropriated \$50,000 from the General Fund Reserve for Contingencies for a capital grants program to address construction impacts on businesses throughout the City:

Ayes: Dodson, Foster, Gillette, Helgeson, Johnson, Seiffert, Hutcherson 7

Noes: 0

// City Council briefly discussed the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Program status report and agreed with staff's recommendation to reprogram certain unspent funds which would

allow \$224,380 more available for distribution to other eligible CDBG projects in FY 2006. Discussion also focused upon reprogramming unspent funds from other projects, i.e., Seeds for Life Housing Rehabilitation project.

// Information Technology Director Mike Goetz provided a brief status report regarding the cable television franchise renewal process with Adelphia.

// During roll call, Council Member Gillette suggested that the phases of the Crosstown Connector project be reexamined and for the Lakeside Drive/Old Forest Road Interchange to be placed high on the list of priorities. Council Member Johnson thanked City Manager Payne for responding to a citizen's concerns regarding the landfill. Council Member Dodson requested an update on the Bluffwalk Project and a breakdown of the final costs for the Monument Terrace Renovation Project. Mr. Dodson also inquired regarding the population figure used for Lynchburg in a recent report by the Virginia Extension Office and suggested that there might be more citizen participation if the Planning Commission meetings started at a later time. Vice Mayor Foster suggested a tour in the Spring by Council Members of the "Lynchburg Grows" greenhouses located on the Schenkel property adjacent to the Lynchburg City Stadium. Vice Mayor Foster also inquired regarding an earlier request for \$3,000 to upgrade the display in the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Center at the Lynchburg Public Library and asked that staff work with the Committee to determine what is needed and what funds would be available to fund the request. City Manager Payne stated that a request has been received from Campbell County asking that City Council reconsider the request of Compson Development to rezone approximately 1.3 acres at 108 Melinda Drive and Wards Road from R-4, Multi-Family Residential, to B-3, Community Business District (Conditional), to allow for a commercial entrance to a proposed shopping center on property located in Campbell County. Mr. Payne explained that since City Council voted to postpone action indefinitely regarding the petition, City Council would first have to agree to reconsider the item prior to any further consideration of the request. Some Council Members expressed concern regarding City Council taking any action prior to receipt of additional information from the petitioner addressing earlier concerns. Following discussion, and on motion of Council Member Johnson, seconded by Council Member Dodson, Council by the following recorded vote asked the City Administration to determine if there is any additional information regarding the rezoning request and to place this item on the February 8 agenda for City Council to determine at that meeting whether or not to reconsider the petition:

Ayes: Dodson, Foster, Gillette, Helgeson, Johnson, Seiffert, Hutcherson 7

Noes: 0

// The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Clerk of Council